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FEMALE MARSH HAWK WITH THE YOUNG AT THE NEST
Photographed on June 30, 1957, when the young were about 10 days old.

LATE SPRING BIRDING IN JOHNSON COUNTY, WITH STUDIES AT A MARSH HAWK NEST

By FRED W. KENT

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and

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(With photographs by Kent)

Too often with the passing of the spring migration the bird watcher lays aside his binoculars. For the last few years our birding has continued into June and even July. And let us assure you, late spring and early summer birding can be exceedingly interesting and productive.

As has been our practice, on the second Sunday of June, to be exact June 9, 1957, we started on a casual birding trip in our own back yard, so to speak. Leaving Iowa City at 9 a.m. accompanied by Dr. Peter Laude, we visited a portion of Amana woodland which was nearly virgin timber.

Cerulean Warblers were singing their buzzy notes. The Acadian Flycatcher was uttering its explosive, two-syllabled song, and in certain parts of the woodland the yellow lady's slippers had achieved size of flower and perfection we had never seen before.

Leaving the heavily timbered area, our trip led to a bushy willow habitat where we were happy to find the Bell's Vireo singing its husky song. Here, too, the Alder Flycatcher was seen singing its distinctive, three-syllabled song.

Continuing our trip, we were approaching a low marshy area when we noticed a Marsh Hawk which had alighted on a grassy spot in a field of sprouting corn. After alighting it took one jump and picked up a mouse with which it immediately took off. We watched it through our binoculars, when to our surprise it suddenly dropped down into the waving sea of marsh grasses. We each fixed its position as we started through the prairie grasses three abreast. We were not 10 feet away when the hawk flushed from its nest immediately in front of us. In a depression on the ground were five white Marsh Hawk eggs. What a find, we felt, for Johnson County! We were determined to return to this attractive area with the waving grasses and blooming prairie phlox to follow the history of this nest.

Our day's birding next took us to a bayou along the Iowa River where one of us (F.K.) had found singing Prothonotary Warblers. The male bird was seen and heard in full song in a willow across the bayou, and as we watched, it dropped down to enter a nesting hole in a fire-blackened stub extending above the water.

Our leisurely day then took us back to Iowa City beside a field where we found Upland Plovers as usual, and a comfortable return home at 3 p.m. with a list of 72 species without having actually extended ourselves in any way. We have gone to some length concerning this one trip to illustrate the excellent birding that can be had on a day in June. On other June trips one of us (F.K.) found the Yellow-breasted Chat just south of Iowa City in Johnson County.

Following our discovery of the Marsh Hawk nest with five eggs on June 9, a return trip by Dr. Laude showed one young to be hatching on June 17. A photographic blind was placed approximately 40 feet from the nest on the evening of June 21, and after leaving the area the female was seen (with binoculars) to return to the nest within a very short time.

Sunday, June 23, dawned bright and clear and the authors were in the blind by 5:30 a.m. Two young hawks and two eggs were present in the nest. Within minutes after entering the blind the female bird had returned to the nest with a mouse to feed the young. The prey was held with one foot, while a piece of bloody meat was torn away with the beak and fed to first one and then the other of the young hawks.

On this first morning in the blind the parent hawks were continually present. The female was the only one ever seen at the nest itself, whether feeding young or brooding, but the smaller male was in the area a great deal of the time, flying nearly perfect figure-eights directly over the blind and calling his monotonous "ki ki ki ki ki ki." Interestingly enough, the male bird was a young cock and had not assumed a gray plumage as yet, being brown like the female but a lighter brown and definitely smaller.

Frequently the female, on returning to the nest, would bring a beak full of dried grasses which she would apparently drop at random after alighting to brood the young. If the young should push themselves off into the grasses at this stage the female, using her beak, would pick them up by the neck and place them beneath her in the nest. Movies were taken of this action.

During our first morning in the blind, mice were fed to the young on two occasions, each time the female returning to the nest after short absences. We are certain that the prey, after having been captured by the male, was passed to the female in the air, as the birds were seen flying together a distance from the nest and only a few feet above the marsh. Unfortunately at the moment of exchange, binoculars were not directly on the birds and the exchange itself was not seen. The whole situation was an extremely attractive one with a gentle wind blowing the marsh grasses and prairie phlox, the male hawk calling and sailing low overhead, and there in front of us, the hen brooding the young.

On Sunday, June 30, we again returned to enter the blind at 6 a.m. This day three young were present in the nest and one presumably sterile egg.



EGGS IN THE MARSH HAWK NEST (JUNE 9, 1957)



FEMALE COMING IN TO THE NEST



THE OLD BIRD SOMETIMES BROUGHT IN A MOUTHFUL OF NEST MATERIAL
(JUNE 30, 1957)



YOUNG MARSH HAWK THREE WEEKS OLD (JULY 7, 1957)

We found the birds far more wary on this trip. The female returned only momentarily for the first three hours, during which time the male flew overhead calling his alarm note "ki ki ki ki." The female was noted to have a high, squealing note to which the young immediately gave attention. At this stage the young avoided the hot sunshine by entering tunnels in the marsh grasses and only returning to the nest when the female finally returned with a mouse. After a three-hour wait, with the female reluctant to come in to the nest, a more complete closure of the openings in the blind and blackening of the shiny lens mounts on the camera apparently permitted her to return.

Again we witnessed the complete feeding of a mouse to the young, during which time the adult flushed frequently, undoubtedly due to the noise of the movie camera or possibly a slight movement within the blind. At times she flushed for seemingly no apparent reason. On flushing, the mouse was seen to be carried, sometimes in the beak, sometimes clutched in a single foot.

Our last trip together to the blind was made on July 7. At this time to all casual observance the nest would appear deserted, but on closer inspection the three young were seen in tunnels in the grass where they were avoiding the hot sun. Though we waited for four hours, no adults returned, and, in fact, they were not often in the area. At intervals the young would emerge from their tunnels to flap their wings in the open nest area quite oblivious to us in the blind. On approaching the young they assumed a defense attitude, beaks open and talons up. Handling them carefully, close-up pictures were secured.

A vacation period now arrived for one of us (R.V.) and the blind was taken down and the hawk nest left undisturbed. Two other visits were made later to the nest, one on July 17 and one on July 20. On the first of these visits two young were found at the nest, one of which immediately scampered into the marsh grasses while the other sat in the nest taking a defense attitude on close approach. The birds were well feathered out and shedding down.

On the visit of July 20, two birds were likewise present with most of the down gone and the birds taking short flights. On these last two visits the nesting area was not searched thoroughly for the third young bird which had probably strayed some distance.

On August 25, over the same area a Marsh Hawk was seen flying to and fro, quartering the marsh. And so to our knowledge a completely successful nesting for Johnson County had taken place.



YOUNG, FOUR TO FIVE WEEKS OLD
Showing white tail coverts (July 20, 1957)

MISCELLANEOUS BIRD NOTES

By MARTIN L. GRANT
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CEDAR FALLS, IOWA

In the spring of 1957 I tried the experiment of putting up in my backyard in Cedar Falls, a Japanese mist net, 36 feet long and 6 feet high. Each strand of the net, though made up of 40 silk fibers twisted together and dyed black, is only 1/200th of an inch thick, such that most birds in flight fail to see it, and are easily trapped. The weaker birds are soon hopelessly entangled, but larger ones (Blue Jays, Grackles) can usually free themselves. Due to frequent absence from home, I didn't get to use the net as much as I would have liked, but over a period of a month, about 50 birds of 20 native species were caught, banded, and released. These were: Downy Woodpecker, Least

Flycatcher, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, House Wren, Catbird, Robin, Hermit Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Warbling Vireo, Ovenbird, Yellowthroat, Baltimore Oriole, Grackle, Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Slate-colored Junco, White-crowned Sparrow, and White-throated Sparrow. In addition, an even hundred House Sparrows were permanently removed from the environment by this method, the most effective answer to the House Sparrow problem I have yet found. Of course, other species of birds, from Bitterns to Hummingbirds, were caught for banding purposes by other methods.

A trip east provided an opportunity for sailing in Mamaroneck Harbor, N. Y., where a flock of 15 Mute Swans was found on July 20, 1957. It was possible to approach them by boat, and also when on land, to within 20 feet. They are, of course, the descendants of tame individuals which were originally introduced into parks, and have much the same status as the Ring-necked Pheasant does in Iowa. The Mute Swan is easily distinguished by its orange-yellow bill, with a conspicuous projection at the base of the upper mandible.

Most of the summer was spent on the campus at Harvard University, working in the Gray Herbarium and in some of the libraries. To one interested in bird literature, a very impressive display was seen at the Museum of Comparative Zoology, where the latest issues of most ornithological periodicals are kept out for reading purposes. A dead bird was found on the campus on August 28 which, with the help of a graduate student, Don Whitehead, was finally identified as a Pine Warbler.

Asa Gray (1810-1888), for whom the Herbarium is named, was interested in saving hand-written letters from famous naturalists, and we spent several hours reading samples from this collection. The majority of the people represented were known best as botanists, but a number had only an indirect connection with that field: Commodore Matthew Perry, who opened Japan; John C. Fremont, explorer and historian; Thomas Jefferson; Benjamin Franklin; Charles Darwin; and Charles Lyell, the famous "uniformitarian" Scots geologist. There were letters from Joel R. Poinsett, U. S. Minister to Mexico, and from Alexander Garden, Charleston (S.C.) physician, from whose surnames we get the plant names *Poinsettia* and *Gardenia*, respectively. C. C. Parry was the first serious plant collector in Iowa, and a letter he wrote to Asa Gray from Davenport, dated Jan. 31, 1861, tells about "my proposed botanical trip to the Rocky Mountains," on which he eventually discovered a great many new plants. Many of the other letters were written by people as much interested in zoology, including birds, as they were in plants: Carl Linnaeus, Jean Lamarck, Conrad Gesner, C. S. Rafinesque, William Bartram, and Mark Catesby.

On the return trip, a visit was paid to the new Ornithology Laboratory at Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y., a building fixed up for bird observation in Sapsucker Woods, just a few miles out of town. A paved road makes access easy to one side of the long building, and a small marshy and swampy lake is found on the other side. Overlooking the lake, whose shore comes to within a few feet of the building, is a large picture window. Outdoor microphones are arranged to carry the songs of the birds inside, so it is possible to sit comfortably out of the weather, and clearly see and hear the birds in the neighborhood. Binoculars, telescopes, and motion-picture cameras are kept on tripods and screwed onto table supports, ready for instantaneous use. We were there only a short while at dusk, but noticed Canada Geese, Mallards and other ducks, a Great Blue Heron, and a Swan (Whistling?) on the lake. Another side of the laboratory building has some outdoor cages, in which were about 20 species of native birds (Bluebirds, Wood Thrushes,

Mourning Doves, etc.), and several types of parrots and exotic doves. All this equipment makes the occupation of bird-watching so simple it is almost automatic.

The Iowa State Teachers College Library recently secured a set of the Bulletin of the Nuttall Ornithological Club, 1876-1883, which had been the property of Ruthven Deane, the secretary of the Nuttall Club when the Bulletin was started. Inserted in the volumes of this set were original letters from many ornithologists of the time, including Elliott Coues, Charles Bendire, William Cooper, Joseph Wade (editor of the Ornithologist and Oölogist), J. A. Allen (editor of the Nuttall Bulletin), and Deane himself. Most interesting were two letters from Maria R. Audubon, granddaughter of John James Audubon, in which she vividly describes a fight between an albino Robin and a mole, which resulted in the death of both. This account was printed in the Nuttall Bulletin in 1878, vol. 3, p. 104. Miss Audubon modestly emphasized in both letters that she did not consider herself an ornithologist.

TWENTY YEARS OF CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUSES IN IOWA — ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

By WOODWARD H. BROWN

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Iowa Bird Life has tabulated the results of 20 Christmas censuses which have been taken in Iowa, the most recent being that taken in 1956. These counts furnish a mass of figures which might be assumed to describe the winter bird population of the state, and suggestions have been made that a wealth of information is contained in these data, and is readily available after a little analysis.

The raw figures tell little; there are too many variables such as differences in habitats, numbers of observers, and weather conditions. Examination of the data accompanying the figures discloses a great lack of uniformity in the procedure followed in the various territories, both as regard the number of hours spent in the field, and in the division of time between car-hours and hours afoot; some do not even give this information. Many of the reports do not conform to the rules of the National Audubon Society for taking the census, and there are breaks in the continuity of reports from some territories.

A study of the data accompanying the census figures for a number of years indicates the reports for six cities, viz. Cedar Rapids, Davenport, Des Moines, Dubuque, Iowa City and Sioux City, for the years 1951 to 1956 may be comparable, and these have been summarized. In order to smooth the peaks and valleys in the numbers of observers the observations have been reduced to numbers of birds seen per party. The use of party-hours as a denominator would be an added refinement, but this information is lacking in some instances. The number of observers has not been used as a denominator on the theory that the number of birds seen will not be a function of the number of observers in the party. This is obvious in the extreme case of Mallards in Des Moines where there is, in most years, one flock containing thousands of ducks. One observer will see as many birds as would be seen by a large party; two or more people may differ regarding the count, but the number seen is unchanged. The same is true, although to a lesser degree, of most other species.

Species' names conform to the Fifth A. O. U. Check-List, and are not as originally given in Iowa Bird Life.

TABLE 1. Number of Individuals Seen Per Party From Christmas Census Reports, Cedar Rapids, Davenport, Dubuque, Des Moines, Iowa City and Sioux City.

Number of Parties	1951 27	1952 23	1953 30	1954 30	1955 36	1956 36
Red-tailed Hawk	.9	1.6	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.9
Red-shouldered Hawk	.4	.6	.4	.5	.7	.5
Marsh Hawk	.1	.5	.4	.4	.1	.3
Sparrow Hawk	.2	.4	.3	.5	.5	.4
Yellow-shafted Flicker	1.8	2.8	4.2	2.2	2.0	1.4
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1.6	2.9	2.6	2.5	4.0	2.8
Red-headed Woodpecker	.5	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.5	.3
Hairy Woodpecker	2.5	2.8	2.9	3.3	3.0	2.7
Downy Woodpecker	6.9	8.3	8.5	11.1	9.3	8.3
Blue Jay	5.0	9.9	7.9	8.4	12.2	5.8
Black-capped Chickadee	27.0	25.1	24.6	27.6	25.8	20.3
Tufted Titmouse	4.3	6.2	4.2	4.7	9.1	6.7
White-breasted Nuthatch	6.5	6.6	6.6	7.9	9.2	7.7
Red-breasted Nuthatch	.6	.4	.4	.8	.1	—
Brown Creeper	2.7	2.4	2.3	1.4	1.1	.6
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1.0	4.1	1.4	1.6	.9	1.1
Meadowlark Sp.	1.8	2.0	1.5	1.7	.9	2.9
Cardinal	13.8	13.5	12.7	17.3	14.6	15.8
Amer. Goldfinch	4.0	5.5	6.9	12.1	7.5	15.3
Slate-colored Junco	44.3	48.0	64.5	63.4	49.0	51.3
Tree Sparrow	37.1	61.8	67.4	114.3	43.3	72.5
Song Sparrow	1.2	4.1	2.4	7.0	3.0	4.3

During the six years the number of species observed in the six cities has ranged from 58 in 1951 to 84 in 1953, with a six-year total of 109. The 1951 and 1953 figures compare with the totals of 65 and 88 reported by all stations. The number of individual birds seen ranged from 10,934 in 1951 to 41,566 in 1956. The variations in numbers may be accounted for by a few species such as Crows in Sioux City (240 to 9,000), Starlings in Cedar Rapids (80 to 5,000) and in Iowa City (48 to 6,059), and Mallards in Des Moines (from 800 to 8,000).

The summary includes most of the species which were consistently reported. For some species, such as the Bald Eagle, practically all of which were seen in two places, a party basis would not be significant since in areas where there are none of a species the number of parties afield will not affect the number of individuals seen. The numbers of those species found in large flocks have likewise been omitted as the number seen is more dependent upon chance with a greater possibility of sampling errors. Various other species are reported in such small numbers as to be unimportant statistically and have also been omitted.

Of the 22 species listed, 1951 was the low year for 12, and 1956 was low for 5. We also find that 1954 was the high year for 7, and 1955 high for 6. One species had the same high in 1954 and 1955. On a state-wide basis 1951 had the smallest number of species in the six years with 65, whereas from 83 to 88 species were reported in the other five years.

The following table shows the years in which each of the 135 reported species was seen by any station. While greater uniformity of censusing methods and continuity in the reporting from various areas would give a more accurate picture, this tabulation does show the degree of regularity with which at least one of the different species has been reported.

Classifying the species according to the number of years in which they were reported places 60 per cent of the list in either the 1-to-3 year or 19 and 20-year groups. Several of those in the 19-year group were missed in 1942 and would doubtless have been included in the 20-year group had normal conditions prevailed in that year. Gas rationing and unusually severe weather held the number of reporting areas to 10.

TABLE 2. List of Species and Years in Which Reported By All Stations

	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	Total No. of Years
Red-necked Grebe			X								X			X				X			1
Pied-billed Grebe												X									4
Double-crested Cormorant													X					X			5
Great Blue Heron				X							X			X				X			7
American Bittern																		X			5
Canada Goose				X						X											1
Snow Goose																					3
Blue Goose			X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20
Mallard				X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Black Duck				X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	14
Gadwall				X	X			X													3
pintail				X	X																2
Green-winged Teal			X	X	X																5
Blue-winged Teal			X	X	X																5
American Widgeon			X	X	X																5
Shoveler	X		X							X											6
Wood Duck																					2
Redhead											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Ring-necked Duck																					3
Canvasback																					3
Lesser Scaup																					3
Common Goldeneye																					3
Bufflehead				X																	2
Old Squaw																					3
White-winged Scoter																					3
Ruddy Duck			X										X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	8
Hooded Merganser													X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	8
Common Merganser	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	18
Red-breasted Merganser																					3
Goshawk			X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	18
Sharp-shinned Hawk			X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	17
Cooper's Hawk			X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20
Red-tailed Hawk			X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	2
Krider's Hawk																					2
Harian's Hawk			X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	19
Red-shouldered Hawk		X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	8
Broad-winged Hawk			X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20
Rough-legged Hawk		X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	3
Ferruginous Hawk																					1
Golden Eagle																					15
Bald Eagle					X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	19
Marsh Hawk		X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Osprey																					1
Prairie Falcon		X																			1
Peregrine Falcon			X																		6

CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUSES

89

	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	Total No. of Years
Robin	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20
Varied Thrush																					1
Eastern Bluebird	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	19
Golden-crowned Kinglet	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20
Ruby-crowned Kinglet																					6
Water Pipit			X																		2
Bohemian Waxwing																					15
Cedar Waxwing	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	13
Northern Shrike	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20
Loggerhead Shrike	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20
Starling	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1
House Sparrow	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	19
Myrtle Warbler	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	16
Meadowlark	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	13
Redwing	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	17
Rusty Blackbird	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1
Common Grackle	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20
Brown-headed Cowbird	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1
Cardinal	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20
Evening Grosbeak	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	3
Purple Finch	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1
Pine Grosbeak	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
Common Redpoll	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	18
Pine Siskin	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1
Amur Goldfinch	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
Red Crossbill	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	4
White-winged Crossbill																					1
Rufous-sided Towhee			X																		9
Savannah Sparrow									X												1
Vesper Sparrow																					2
Lark Sparrow			X																		1
Slate-colored Junco	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20
Tree Sparrow	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20
Chipping Sparrow																					2
Field Sparrow																					4
Harris' Sparrow	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	4
White-crowned Sparrow				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20
White-throated Sparrow			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
Fox Sparrow			X																		9
Swamp Sparrow																					6
Song Sparrow	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	5
Lapland Longspur	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20
Chestnut-collared Longspur	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	12
Snow Bunting			X																		1
TOTALS	51	57	74	68	65	39	62	55	65	74	72	77	71	70	65	83	88	87	88	85	6
Stations Reporting	10	9	18	18	13	10	13	12	20	15	19	18	19	17	21	20	18	21	21	22	

The numbers of species grouped according to frequency of reports are:

No. Yrs.	Species
1	20
2	13
3	10
4	4
5	4
6	6
7	3
8	5
9	6
10	2
11	1
12	2
13	4
14	3
15	4
16	1
17	4
18	6
19	8
20	29
<hr/>	
Total	135

Considering the waterfowl as a group, the contrast between the numbers of species reported from 1937 to 1945, and from 1946 to 1956 is quite noticeable. An average of 4.6 species was reported in the first nine years compared with 12.8 species per year for the 11 years following. The poor showings in 1942 and 1944 must be attributed to unfavorable weather and war conditions. The larger numbers of species from 1946 on were reported from different areas from year to year although increased activity at Davenport and the building of the Impounding Reservoir near Des Moines were factors.

Bald Eagles have been reported regularly in recent years from Dubuque and Davenport, the latter place finding them in large numbers. Although reports were made from Dubuque for each of the years prior to 1941, the census for that year was the first to include the Bald Eagle.

Ruffed Grouse were reported in four of the six years beginning with 1950 from Dyersville, Decorah and Harper's Ferry. The fact that none of these places made reports prior to 1950 must to some extent account for the failure of this species to appear on the list in earlier years.

Barn Owls were found in Dubuque in 1940 and in Ottumwa in 1955. As this species was designated by the contributors to the Distributional Check-List as a permanent resident in all sections, it is odd that it has not appeared more often in the census reports.

Horned Larks are missing in only 1943 and 1947, this despite the fact that 13 stations reported in 1943 and 19 in 1947 and neither winter was particularly severe.

Magpies were reported in six of the first seven years, then, after a five-year absence were seen in 1949 and 1951 but in no year thereafter. A possible explanation is the fact that Sioux City has been the only area reporting from the extreme western part of the state in recent years. With the exception of one report from New Hartford, all reports of this species have been from the west.

Carolina Wrens appeared three times at intervals prior to 1952 but have been seen each year since then. The species seems to have become well established in the last few years and was reported from six stations in 1956.

Cedar Waxwings were recorded in four of the first five years, then, after an absence of four years, reappeared in 1946 and each year thereafter. The erratic nature of this species is illustrated by the fact that in the last five years the reporting stations were 1, 6, 2, 12 and 2 in number.

Loggerhead Shrikes were reported only in 1955 and 1956. Many of us have been prone to call all winter shrikes Northern Shrikes until the appearance of several recent papers on the identification of the two species—Dale Zimmerman's article in *Wilson Bulletin*, 67:200-208, for instance.

It is regrettable that not all of our Christmas censuses have been taken according to the rules of the National Audubon Society. Census figures obtained after an all-day count, particularly if the count is made on foot with a car being used only to get from point to point, should furnish a true picture of the population of the area covered. Any other type of census results only in numbers which, by themselves or in combination with others, are relatively meaningless as far as showing trends is concerned. If all the reports which have been published in the past 20 years were the result of the proper kind of census, and written up in proper detail, we would now have a far better idea of the winter bird population shifts and changes, both with respect to species and numbers of individuals.

We should also have, in the future, reports which are better balanced geographically as there are large sections of the state which are now not covered at all. Better coverage and the correct kind of census taking would, in time, furnish a great amount of information to the student of Iowa bird life.

WINTER BIRDING AND NEW FARM PRACTICES IN SOUTHERN IOWA

By J. DONALD GILLASPEY

Route 3
LAMONI, IOWA

The recently expanded acreage of grain sorghum in this part of the state provides a wonderful winter food supply for sparrows, juncos, finches, and other seed-eating birds. The grain is harvested by combine. Under the most favorable conditions there is a certain amount of broken heads and unthreshed seeds left on the ground. In less favorable weather the amount of grain left on the ground may be considerable. The individual kernels of grain are small enough to be easily eaten by small birds, and are also so small that any livestock gleaning in the fields cannot possibly get all the grains—this in contrast, for example, with ears of corn left in the field.

For a genuine bird-watcher's bonanza, be on the lookout for a field which has not yet been harvested because of wet weather or early snow. Such a field adjacent to a wooded shelter area is particularly good. Sometimes there is unharvested volunteer grain sorghum in a field. Also, some fields are cut and shocked for fodder with the heads left on the stalks. Around October 1 the reddish-brown fields of grain sorghum can easily be located over the countryside.

Trench silos have come into rather common use in many parts of southern Iowa. Frequently a solitary Sparrow Hawk or shrike or both may be observed in the vicinity of the trench. Mice harbor in the edges and provide good hunting for these birds. The warmth of the mass of ensilage and the

protection afforded by the trench may be attractive to smaller birds during severe weather.

In winter it is becoming more common for cattlemen in southern Iowa to feed their beef cattle out in the fields. Bales of hay are hauled out and placed in locations around the field where it is desired to have the manure scattered. This eliminates the work of hauling the manure away from the barn lots. Hay-balers which make round bales that do not fall apart when the bale ties are broken have come into general use during the last 10 years. This has made field feeding even more practicable. Of course, blizzards, unusual snowfall, or soft fields will at times interfere with this.

The birds find excellent feeding after the cattle. This is especially so when the ground is covered with a blanket of snow. There is a certain amount of actual seeds of timothy, lespedeza, various weeds, clover, etc. which sifts out of the hay. There are also seed and grain particles in the cattle manure. Birds regularly attracted in numbers are Horned Lark, Meadowlark, Lapland Longspur, Starling, and English Sparrow. An occasional Grackle, Mourning Dove, or Flicker can be seen and careful observation might disclose additional species.

BIRDING IN THE BACK YARD

By WILLIAM YOUNG WORTH

3119 East Second St.
SIOUX CITY, IOWA

For many years people have been asking me to name the best place to look for birds. After telling them of a good spot or two, I usually finish by telling them not to overlook their own back yards as a fine place to study birds.

I was very much impressed with the beautifully illustrated article by Earnest W. Steffen of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on "Warblers and the Greater Cedar Rapids", in *Iowa Bird Life* for June, 1956. In this article Mr. Steffen tells of the inroads of progress on the good birding areas around his home. With his article in mind I began to check off the areas here at Sioux City where 30 years ago I made some of my best migration records. A four-lane highway through the middle of one area ruined it completely. An oil-tank farm and a storage yard erased forever the spot where I could usually find Phoebe's in late March. A land-fill garbage dump, now a level area of many acres, formerly was a fine ravine where we could always find many warblers in the spring. Area after area has disappeared or is in the process of disappearing. Back-yard birding now seems to answer a part of the problem of finding good areas for observation.

To old-timers in bird work this is not a new procedure, for they have always found interesting birds in their own yards. To newcomers, who are prone to look farther afield, I would suggest following the advice of Athos and Sara Menaboni. In their "Menaboni's Birds," these talented people state: "From personal experience and observation, we believe there are no happier persons than those who are intent upon collecting nature data. And each person should make a beginning of his collection in his own 'back yard.' Of course he may branch out, go farther afield, perhaps decide to specialize in one subject, but the more he learns the more he knows lies in wait for him in his original back yard."

With the above thought in mind it behooves all of us to plant a few shrubs about the back yard and to provide water at all times during migration. If cats are not too numerous, a basin of water on the ground will attract warblers that will often pass up the regular bird bath. I have also dis-

covered that a thick hedge somewhere on the back of the property is a wonderful haven for small birds. Often a slamming door will send the warblers diving for the hedge, but a patient wait will also reveal these birds working down the hedge toward you. You will be rewarded by opportunities for close observations of many elusive warblers.

Mr. Steffen gave a fine list of warblers seen in his own yard. I hope other readers will have equal success. In my own case some of my best records were made right at home. One pleasant memory was the finding of a Prairie Marsh Wren in our fern bed. A few days later William R. Felton, Jr. and I sat and watched a Winter Wren feeding in the same fern bed at distances of 3 or 4 feet. So, albeit you may wait 30 years, you will in time see many of the migrating species right in your own back yard. Some you will never see, but don't let that deter you or make you lose heart. If you pick up a copy of some honest ornithologist's work, such as A. C. Bent, T. S. Roberts, or Edward H. Forbush, and read through the pages, every now and then you will read, "I have never seen this species in life."

I think back-yard birding is especially applicable to us older members of bird-watching societies as our favorite haunts are uprooted and the traffic on our roads increases its pressure on our less active reflexes. This brings to mind a quote from the column entitled "The Hour Glass", which appears in the Sioux City Journal and is written by our own Louise Sammons Freese: ". . . my own calendar of days is being turned too fast, as if an unfettered hand were brushing against the pages."

And so, fellow friends of the birds, guard well that little plot of ground back of your wigwam even though the taxes on it seem to mount every year. Make your yard a little sanctuary for birds and never lose sight of the fact that about the only thing still free to you as a bird-watcher is the patch of blue sky over your homestead. There you can still see some of the finest sights in nature for the watching. These may be the flights of the wild goose, the milling of a platoon of majestic pelicans, or gulls or nighthawks busily feeding on winged insects as they cross over your own private patch of sky. All this and much more is offered right in your own back yard. Good birding!

WATER-BIRD MIGRATION AT LITTLE WALL LAKE, HAMILTON COUNTY, IOWA, SPRING OF 1957

By PETER PETERSEN, JR.

630 East 30th St.
DAVENPORT, IOWA
and

WILLIAM SEARS

Dept. of Zoology & Entomology
Iowa State College
AMES, IOWA

The count was begun on February 25 and was taken at least once a week through June 14. Little Wall Lake was much shallower than usual in the spring of 1957 because of the lack of rainfall. Even the heavy rains of May did not help the situation. Due to the drought much of the lake bed was dry. The south end was the only open-water area. The lake, usually about 300 acres in area, was reduced to about 150 acres. The lake had at least some open water throughout the count period. The following table summarizes the count.

Geese, Ducks, Coots and Shore-birds at Little Wall Lake, Spring 1957.

	Date First Seen	Dates of Main Flight	Largest Concentration	Date Last Seen
Canada Goose	Mar. 11	Apr. 13	9	May 12
White-fronted Goose	Mar. 11	Mar. 16	10	May 6
Snow Goose	Mar. 11	Mar. 16	65	Apr. 26
Blue Goose	Mar. 11	Mar. 16	550	May 18
Mallard	Feb. 25	Mar.16&Apr.13	3000	June 14
Black Duck	Mar. 11	Apr. 6	4	Apr. 6
Gadwall	Mar. 16	Apr. 7	50	May 23
Pintail	Feb. 25	Mar. 16	1500	May 23
Green-winged Teal	Mar. 16	Mar. 16	125	May 14
Blue-winged Teal	Mar. 30	Apr. 26	45	June 14
American Widgeon	Mar. 11	Mar.30-Apr.13	185	June 14
Shoveller	Mar. 11	Apr. 20	75	May 28
Redhead	Mar. 11	Mar. 30	105	May 23
Ring-necked Duck	Mar. 11	Mar.16&30	95	June 6
Canvasback	Mar. 16	Mar. 30	52	May 28
Lesser Scaup	Mar. 30	Apr.7&13	125	May 6
Ruddy Duck	Mar. 30	Apr. 26	75	May 23
Bufflehead	Apr. 28	Apr. 28	1	Apr. 28
Hooded Merganser	Mar. 30	Mar. 30	2	Mar. 30
Common Merganser	Feb. 28	Mar. 16	15	May 6
Coot	Mar. 11	Apr.13&26	500	June 6
Piping Plover	May 14	May 14	1	May 14
Ringed Plover	May 12	May 12	16	May 28
Killdeer	Mar. 11	Apr.13&28	36	June 6
Golden Plover	May 6	May 6	2	May 6
Black-bellied Plover	May 21	May 21	2	May 21
Common Snipe	Mar. 30	Apr. 28	3	Apr. 28
Upland Plover	June 14	June 14	1	June 14
Spotted Sandpiper	Apr. 28	May 15	2	May 23
Willet	Apr. 26	Apr. 26	30	Apr. 28
Greater Yellowlegs	Apr. 20	May 3	2	May 3
Lesser Yellowlegs	Apr. 6	Apr. 26	45	May 23
Pectoral Sandpiper	Apr. 28	Apr. 28	10	May 23
Least Sandpiper	May 12	May 15	12	May 26
Dunlin	May 23	May 23	1	May 23
Dowitcher	Apr. 28	Apr. 28	1	Apr. 28
Semipalmated Sandpiper	May 23	May 23	7	May 28
Marbled Godwit	Apr. 20	Apr. 20	1	Apr. 20
Sanderling	May 23	May 23	4	May 23
Wilson's Phalarope	May 12	May 23	16	May 28

Other birds worthy of note were: White Pelican, up to 135 seen from May 15 to May 23; Little Blue Heron, two (immatures) on May 26; Whistling Swan, five on March 30; Osprey, one on May 3; Common Tern, one on May 21; Caspian Tern, six on May 12, ten on May 15; Savannah Sparrow, one on April 20, one on May 3, three on May 12, two on May 21.

The authors made a total of 20 trips, and six additional trips were made by Dennis Carter, to whom we are deeply indebted for cooperation. Mr. Carter made the trips of April 20, 28, and May 3, 12, 16, and June 14. We are also indebted to Dr. George O. Hendrickson for his advice and suggestions. All observations by the authors were made with a 20x 'scope.

THE FALL IOU PICNIC AT KEOMAH STATE PARK

By MYRLE M. BURK

Secy.-Treasurer

Fifty-five members and friends of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union gathered at Lake Keomah State Park Sunday, September 22, 1957. It was one of Iowa's beautiful days, with warm, bright sunshine and a few fleecy clouds in the blue sky where the hawks soared.

During the morning the group explored the park and studied the birds, plants and fungi. Picnic dinner was eaten in the Youth Center House. Mr. and Mrs. Partridge served excellent coffee and pop.

The group met together in the afternoon on the lawn of the Youth Center House for a short business meeting, President John Paul Moore presiding.

Harold H. Burgess described the problems of identification of birds, particularly warblers and shore-birds in fall plumage, at Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge, near Burt, Iowa. Mr. Burgess, who is Refuge Manager, invited members to visit the refuge to help in making a survey. Peter Petersen and Dennis Carter had worked at the refuge the past summer.

James Sieh, waterfowl biologist of Spirit Lake, discussed briefly the relation of weather pattern to mass migration of ducks. A pattern of high and low pressure areas in the northwest with northwest winds blowing across the continent stimulates mass migrations: Blue-winged Teal and Pintail in September, Canvasback and Ring-necks in October, and Mallards and Scaups in November. On last November 7 at 8:30 a. m., Scaups and Mallards began crossing the roof of Iowa; 12,000 were counted, marked on a clip-board. He urged members to watch for these mass migrations.

Russell Hays, Waterloo, who had just returned from Duluth, observed the migration of hawks with a group from the Duluth Bird Club; 6,600 hawks, many of which were Broad-wings, were counted during four days.

M. E. Stempel, Ottumwa, spoke of the vanishing Prairie Chicken, which is still found, but rarely, in Iowa. To furnish a refuge for the Prairie Chicken, a preserve of not less than 40,000 acres is to be established as a National Monument, either in western Nebraska or the Dakotas. Upon motion by Dr. J. Harold Ennis, the Union adopted a resolution favoring the establishment of the National Grasslands Monument for the preservation of the Prairie Chicken.

Other members contributed anecdotes of their bird-study experiences, which were interesting and sometimes amusing.

The following members and friends express their thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Partridge and family for the pleasure and hospitality enjoyed at this picnic: BURT, Harold H. Burgess; CEDAR RAPIDS, Eleanore Fullerton, Lillian Serbousek, Pauline Werhofen; DAVENPORT, Mr. and Mrs. Peter C. Petersen, Sr., Peter Petersen, Jr.; DES MOINES, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Atherton, Larry Atherton, Carl Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Brooke, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Eyerly, Mr. and Mrs. Lester H. Haskell, Gary Kline, Mary Ellen Warters; FARLEY, Mr. and Mrs. George E. Crossley; IOWA CITY, Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Kent, Dr. and Mrs. Peter Laude; MOUNT VERNON, J. Harold Ennis; NEWTON, Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Moore, Sam Moore, Mrs. Floyd Parker, Konnie Yoshinaga; OSKALOOSA, Mr. and Mrs. Wayne F. Partridge, Gene Partridge, Richard Tomten; OTTUMWA, Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Stempel, Reid Stempel, Becky Stempel, Mr. and Mrs. Orville T. Upp; PLEASANTVILLE, Mrs. Gladys B. Black; SIGOURNEY, Mr. and Mrs. Forrest Millikin, Sue Partridge, Eva Lou Runyon; SPIRIT LAKE, James G. Sieh; UNION, Elvin Adams, Mrs. Elvin Adams; WATERLOO, Myrle M. Burk, Helen Hawkins, Russell M. Hays, Margaret Nagel, Pearl Rader; WHEATLAND, C. Esther Copp.

A LEAST BITTERN IN THE HAND

By MARTIN L. GRANT

Iowa State Teachers College
CEDAR FALLS, IOWA

On May 19, 1957, after the close of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union Convention at Estherville, I took a group of students home by way of Ingham Lake, also in Emmet County, in order to see the Snowy Egret which had been observed by several of the field parties. The egret was easy to find, and he finally settled in the water near the dam and spillway at the northeast corner of the lake. We drove around behind the dam and cautiously climbed up on it to observe the unsuspecting egret at a range of 30 feet. He lifted his legs gracefully, showing off the bright yellow feet, which contrasted strikingly with the black legs.

Just as we were leaving, one of the students, Madeline Carpenter, pointed out a peculiar "rock" projecting up out of the mud, and asked what it was. It looked like a round ball of feathers on stilts, and, from its size and long legs, could only have been a Least Bittern, asleep with its head and bill completely concealed under a wing. Just two yards from the dam, it was completely out in the open, on a mud-flat.



"WE . . . TOOK ITS PICTURE FROM SEVERAL ANGLES."

The idea of catching the bird for banding purposes immediately occurred to us, so, with a butterfly net, we approached carefully, and the bird lifted up its head just as we stood directly above it. The net dropped over it easily, and we took it to a drier shore, banded it, and took its picture from several angles.

The bittern showed no interest in fighting or escaping, acting as though it were extremely tired. It allowed us to handle it freely, staying where it was posed, and, when we finally released it, in some rushes, it stayed put, allowing us to return and change its position. We suspected that it may have just arrived after a long migratory flight, possibly from Mexico, and thus might have been completely exhausted. That the bird was a most recent migrant was further indicated by the fact that the Union members had been combing this area for two days without finding any of the species. So, wishing him a good sleep and a happy summer, we left for Cedar Falls.

GENERAL NOTES

Swainson's Hawk.—I am wondering if Swainson's Hawk may be increasing here in northeast Iowa. In 1957 I saw four in scattered locations, one in Wyth Park, one at our sanctuary south of Waterloo, and one near Tripoli. I had fine views of all these birds with no question as to their identity. One was seen in the spring and the other three in the summer months.—RUSSELL HAYS, 825 Franklin St., Waterloo, Iowa.

Western Kingbird at Keokuk.—On September 10, 1957, a Western Kingbird was seen in our yard. It spent all afternoon sitting on electric light wires, flying down after insects, and at times lighting on a fence about 50 feet from our living room window. I was familiar with the bird as I had spent a year at Grand Island, Nebraska, where it was common. This was the first time I had seen it in eastern Iowa.—ALOIS J. WEBER, Route 2, Keokuk, Iowa.

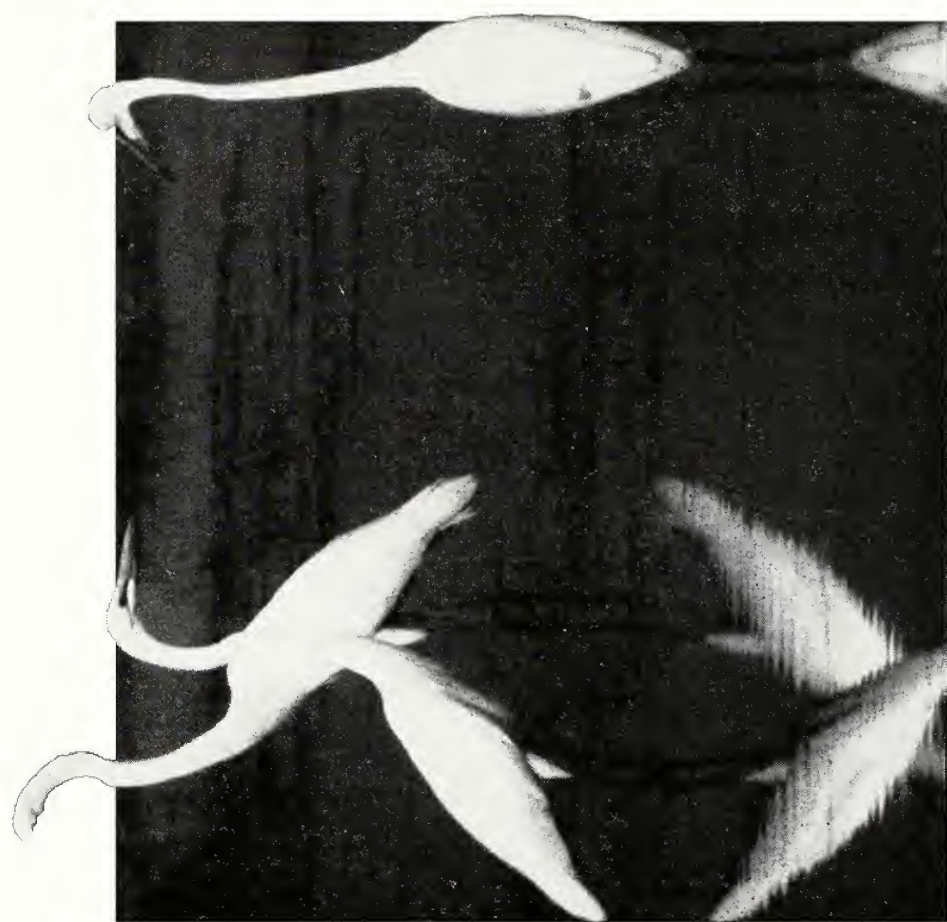
Mockingbird as an Imitator.—One of my neighbors, Cecil Teale, obtained an unusually good recording of a Mockingbird's notes on June 11, 1957. The songs and notes of the following 14 birds are clearly recognizable: Robin, Blue Jay, House Sparrow, Catbird, Red-headed Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Brown Thrasher, Upland Plover, Phoebe, Meadowlark, Cuckoo, Cardinal, Whip-poor-will, Crested Flycatcher and a domestic Guinea hen. There were several other songs of birds which we could not identify but they were quite distinctive. We found the study of these songs very interesting.—J. DONALD GILLASPEY, Route 3, Lamoni, Iowa.

Shore-birds and Others in the Davenport Region.—On the afternoon of May 8, 1957, I heard of a strange wading bird that had been seen at Credit Island and was thought by the first viewer to be an adult Little Blue Heron. I got in touch with Tom Morrissey at St. Ambrose College and we went to the Island to investigate. A grassy mud flat at the upper end of the Credit Island harbor had a mixed group of shore-birds including Semipalmated Plover, Least, Baird's, Spotted, Pectoral and Solitary Sandpipers, and a group of Great Blue Herons and American Egrets. Close study with 7x50 glasses and a 20-power 'scope at a distance estimated at less than 200 feet finally disclosed the strange bird, which we identified as the Eastern Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*). Viewing conditions were perfect—afternoon light coming from behind us and from the left as we observed. The down-curved bill and the shiny plumage, which appeared to be a greenish black not unlike that of a Grackle, were clearly apparent. There appeared to be no pronounced contrast between the general tone of the plumage and the skin around bill and eye. There was no trace of the red skin or the white facial feathers of the White-faced Glossy Ibis.

The bird fed in the wet grass and the shallow water for as long as we were able to watch. We kept it under observation for about a half hour before our schedules made it necessary that we leave. A check was made on each of the two days following, both of the same area and of the similar Nahant marsh a few miles away, but the bird was not seen again. On May 10, however, the same mud flat had a Willet, a Wilson's Phalarope and a Bonaparte's Gull feeding so close together they could be observed through the 'scope without moving at all.

I was interested to notice in the spring season report in Audubon Field Notes several reports of Ibis in unusual locations in the north.

The area west of McCausland is one of the best in the Davenport region for shore-birds when water conditions are right. The spring of 1957 was unusually poor due to an almost complete lack of water in the best locations.



The good rains of mid and late summer changed the picture and produced some ideal situations. On August 31, Tom Morrissey and I were able to check a number of these locations. The best was a field about 2 miles west of McCausland with several good pasture ponds. Our attention was attracted first by the call notes of Golden Plover, often found in the area in spring—though not in 1957—but never found there in the fall by either of us until this year. We found three, all still in a predominantly summer plumage. There were also both Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, eight Dowitchers, a large group of Wilson's Snipe, Semipalmated Plover, Least, Pectoral and Solitary Sandpipers. The different species tended to feed more or less together but when flushed flew away as one compact flock.—REV. EDWARD T. GREER, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Davenport, Iowa.

Back-yard Bird Observations, Northwood, Spring of 1957.—The peak of the spring migration in Worth County, Iowa, came on May 21 and 22. I found that birding in my own back yard could be as exciting an experience as a planned field trip. In the early evening of May 20, we had a severe rainstorm with high winds. Birds chirped and fluttered about seeking protection from the storm. Next morning was clear.

Looking out of my window at 6:30 a.m., I was much surprised to see a Magnolia and a Blackburnian Warbler flitting about some shrubs about 15 feet away. It was my first observation of the Blackburnian near my home. Later in the forenoon my husband came in from chores and said, "The grove near the barn is alive with birds." This grove, about 40 feet from the barn, consists of large maple trees with a poultry fence on one end.

Under these trees birds were hopping about the ground, flying and perching on the low branches and brushpiles—continually on the move as they searched for food. I could stand near the barn door and observe them with ease. Least Flycatchers, of which there were three or four to every warbler, kept darting about and getting in my line of vision. Redstarts outnumbered the other warblers; I counted five or six males and four females. There were at least four each of Mourning, Yellow and Wilson's Warblers, six Yellowthroats, two Chestnut-sided, four Magnolia Warblers, and two Ovenbirds as well as two Catbirds, one Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, and a Black-billed Cuckoo that obliged by sitting on a fallen log for some time.

On the following day, May 22, the warblers began to spread out. Some of the Redstarts, Yellow and Mourning Warblers found their way to two large crab trees in our house yard near our back porch, then to the lilac bushes near by. A pair of Mourning Warblers played about my front steps. A few Mourning and Redstarts were still about on the third day. I saw them now and then for a week afterward, then they were all gone and with them three Olive-backed Thrushes that had been here since April 29. On May 22 my husband discovered a strange bird in another grove. We identified it later as a Virginia Rail and it stayed three days. Earlier in May he saw several Golden Plovers in his plowed field.

Other spring records were: Towhee, two on April 21; Hermit Thrush, five on April 19; additions to my "Home bird list" in 1957 were Scarlet Tanager, Towhee, Baltimore Oriole, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided and Canada Warblers.—MRS. JOHN BOTTLEMAN, Route 2, Northwood, Iowa.

← On opposite page

AMERICAN EGRETS AT CONESVILLE MARSH
Photographed by Fred W. Kent, August, 1957.

Corrections to Check-List of Iowa Birds.—With the issuance of the Fifth Edition of the A.O.U. Check-List (see book reviews) several changes in species names will need to be made in the Check-List of Iowa Birds when it is next reprinted. In order that you may become familiar with these changes at this time, new names which were changed or added are given below, and are capitalized.

GREATER Prairie Chicken	NORTHERN Shrike
GRAY Partridge	Black-and-white Warbler
COMMON Gallinule	BLACKPOLL Warbler
SHORT-BILLED Dowitcher,	Northern WATERTHRUSH
AMERICAN Avocet	Louisiana WATERTHRUSH
GREAT Horned Owl	WILSON'S Warbler
COMMON Nighthawk	RedwingED BLACKBIRD
COMMON Crow	COMMON Grackle
LONG-BILLED Marsh Wren	HARRIS' Sparrow
SHORT-BILLED MARSH Wren	

The Editor has indicated that these changes should be followed hereafter in preparing material for Iowa Bird Life.—PHILIP A. DU MONT, Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C.

Notes from Okamanpedan State Park.—A trip that I made to Okamanpedan State Park, Emmet County, on the afternoon of August 20, 1957, yielded some interesting records. I was surprised to find a Red-breasted Nuthatch working up and down the trunks and limbs of trees near the shore of Tuttle Lake. The nuthatch was within 2 yards of me at one time. This is my only August record of this species in Iowa. Migrating warblers were feeding in trees in the park, and I counted nine Blackburnians, two Chestnut-sided, and three Canadas.

While watching the warblers, I noticed a small bird carrying food to a juvenile Cowbird sitting on a branch near the ground. I soon identified the "parent" as a Red-eyed Vireo. When I returned to the same area a half hour later, the Cowbird and vireo were in the top of an ash tree, and the vireo was bringing food to the Cowbird at intervals of about two minutes. The Cowbird seemed to require a considerable amount of food and even pursued the vireo at times. I observed this strange pair for a third and last time in a nearby brushy area, again with warblers. I did not see more than one vireo with the Cowbird, although it is possible that two "parents" were involved.—DENNIS L. CARTER, Museum of Zoology, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Banding Waterfowl in Alberta.—During the summer of 1957, I worked as a representative of the Iowa State Conservation Commission with a U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service duck banding crew in southern Alberta. From June 21 to July 24, we moved about this area and worked out of Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Brooks, Calgary, Drumheller and some smaller towns. We used drive-trapping methods to catch young ducks that were unable to fly and also molting adults. A total of 6,440 ducks and Coots banded included 1,228 Mallards, 3,091 Pintails, 562 Shovelers, 356 Baldpates, 36 Gadwalls, 677 Blue-winged Teal, 142 Green-winged Teal, 13 Canvasbacks, 19 Redheads, 35 Lesser Scaups and 281 Coots.

In addition to waterfowl, I was much impressed by the abundance of shore-birds in the vicinity of the lakes and marshes. Willet, Marbled Godwit, Avocet and Wilson's Phalarope were numerous, and I observed nests and young of these species.

Among the passerine birds, Eastern Kingbird, Horned Lark, Western Meadowlark, Savannah Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow and Chestnut-sided Longspur seemed to be the most abundant species in areas where we worked. While engaged in banding activities I added the following species to my Life List of birds: Red-necked Grebe, Golden Eagle, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Long-billed Curlew (nest with four eggs found), California Gull, Mountain Bluebird and Chestnut-collared Longspur. A field trip along the Oldman River near Lethbridge yielded a Rock Wren and a Black-backed Grosbeak. A holiday trip to Waterton Lakes National Park on July 1 resulted in the addition of Raven, Boreal Chickadee, Audubon's Warbler, White-winged Crossbill and Oregon Junco to my list.—DENNIS L. CARTER, Museum of Zoology, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

The Bouncy Goldfinch.—In the fall when the parent Goldfinches bring their young to our lawns and gardens we are treated to a bird show that is almost for a conjurer alone to follow. Some of the males are still in fair summer plumage, but the females are grayer than the young, which range from rusty bronze to almost lilac shades as the light changes on their plumage. Of course, the main attraction to Goldfinches is our running lawn sprinkler and they revel in the spray.

During the course of one day the feeding habits of these Goldfinch flocks became of real interest. First we saw them in the top of a lilac bush busily prying into the seed pods for food; then they were found in a cherry tree picking nits from the tiny twigs; their next activity was another shower bath under the sprinkler. By this time a flock of Harris's, White-throated and Lincoln's Sparrows had settled in a patch of crab grass, and not to be outdone, the Goldfinches also partook of those tiny seeds. One finch espied the split end of a catalpa bean and became very busy at pulling out the sheathed seeds and shucking them. Another flew to an elm tree, where a ragged wound was exuding sap. Here it spent several minutes drinking the sweet sap. As the afternoon waned the flying ants poured from their underground homes. From the tops of the tall trees our little friends, the Goldfinches began flying out to catch these succulent morsels.—WILLIAM YOUNG WORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

Notes on the Hawk Flight at Duluth.—Arriving at Duluth, Minnesota, on Friday, September 13, 1957, I spent the afternoon on the ridge above the city where I saw an estimated 1,800 hawks. Bob Koehn saw 1,900 during the forenoon; this included one Bald Eagle which was the only one seen in three days. This was the great Broad-wing flight I had heard about but had not seen. Long strings of hawks were streaming overhead, 180 in one group, 150 in another, and other groups of 100, 90, 80, each one going into a swirl directly over my head—a thrill and a great satisfaction. The next two days, September 14 and 15, were not up to the first day, but 1,300 were counted on the 14th and 1,500 on the 15th. The usual Sharp-shins flew low over the road and down the valley. There were Turkey Vultures, Red-shoulders and Red-tails, but Broad-wings made up the big flocks. There were a number of Ospreys, two Goshawks, some Cooper's, many Sparrow Hawks, and three Pigeon Hawks. One Duck Hawk was seen at a sand point where shore-birds gathered.

As a side light to the hawk flight, Mr. Johnson, a bird-bander, trapped and banded a Catbird, Least Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo and a Mourning Warbler on the hill. We got a close look at a Philadelphia Vireo, not over 10 feet away. The hillside was alive with sparrows and warblers. There were many people there to see the hawk flight. Some had come from as far as Chicago and Sioux Falls.—RUSSELL HAYS, 825 Franklin St., Waterloo, Iowa.

RECENT BIRD BOOKS

THE BIRD WATCHER'S ANTHOLOGY, edited by Roger Tory Peterson (Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1957; cloth, 8vo size, pp. i-xv+1-401, with one colored plate and more than 100 drawings by the author; price, \$7.50).

Most bird students are avid readers. Reading about birds seems to go right along with watching them. As one looks back over the years, there often has been a wish that many of the interesting stories about birds could be collected into one volume, where they could be easily reread, instead of being buried in numerous scattered volumes and seldom seen again.

The purpose of this book was to put a good supply of highly enjoyable bird literature within the covers of one volume. The results are most satisfactory. Roger Tory Peterson has done a great deal of reading on birds, and his selections from the copious literature will be approved by most of his readers. Using his own judgment and working from lists submitted by his friends, he built up a big, solid book of very readable material, one that offers many hours of the finest entertainment for bird students.

He laid out the book in a sort of progression—from the initial interest of the budding ornithologist, on through the early stages of thrill and discovery, later going into the multiple phases of bird study, and finally to the mature observations of the advanced student. There are selections from 85 writers and the sectional plan is in this sequence:

I) 'The Spark,' including selections from Burroughs, Kieran, Huxley, Coues and Peter Scott; II) 'The Lure of the List,' from Devoe, Florence Jaques, Maurice Brooks, others; III) 'Migration,' from Peattie, Deck, Beebe, Teale, Hochbaum, Broun, Hudson, Brandt, Gatke; IV) 'Glamour Birds,' from Audubon, Wilson, Bartsch, Bartram, Chapman, Ripley, various others; V) 'Birds in Far Places,' from Beston, Lockley, Fisher, Darwin, Murphy, Sutton, Fuertes; VI) 'There Is Often Adventure,' from Matthews, Forbush, Griffin, Zahl, Robert Allen, Chapin, Brewster, Arthur Allen; VII) 'The Full-fledged Watcher,' from Gilbert White, Jeffries, Seton, Loye Miller, Grinnell, Skutch, Vogt and various others.

Dr. Peterson has done more for the book that merely choose the material. At the beginning of each selection he has a lively commentary on that particular writer—something about his life and achievements, or perhaps a personal note for many of them are Peterson's friends. There are also more than 100 of his fine drawings, which make this an unusually attractive book.

Anthologies are always worth while, and new ones appear at regular intervals. In works of this kind the Peterson book definitely sets a new standard of excellence.—F. J. P.

* * * * *

CHECK-LIST OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS, Fifth Edition, prepared by a Committee of the American Ornithologists' Union (1957; cloth binding, pp. i-ix+1-691; price, \$8.00).

It has been 26 years since the preceding edition of the Check-List was issued. During the intervening years field work has been greatly expanded in the more remote regions of the continent. Reliable sight records have generally become acceptable at least on a species basis for establishing extensions of range. And thanks to the closer working relationships between the Committee on Classification and Nomenclature, headed by Dr. Alexander Wetmore, and systematists concerned with Old World birds, the ranges are now more perfectly described, and even vernacular names of circumpolar species are in much closer agreement.

One of the striking changes in this Fifth Edition of the Check-List is the use of common names for species—not included in earlier editions. These are

the only common or vernacular names included. The complete range is given for each species. This is broken down further for the subspecies, which are listed only under the trinomial scientific names. Ranges follow a regular pattern from northwest to southeast, and are further broken down into breeding and wintering ranges, and casual records. Migration routes, when of special significance, are noted. The continued inclusion of Baja California, the 800-mile isolated peninsula extending southward almost half the length of Mexico, seems to have little justification, as compared with interest generally in other parts of Mexico.

Iowa is mentioned often in the ranges as they are broken down for subspecies. This is an acknowledgement of the extensive field work done in the State and the splendid reference literature available. Issuance of each new revision of the Check-List serves as a stimulus for further work extending or refining limits of ranges.

Changes in some species names were inevitable. Many of these new names have already been incorporated in recent field guides and our own Field Check-List of Iowa Birds. In the final editing some further changes were made, most of which seem to be worthwhile. Modifications in names for our Field Check-List, which will be made when next reprinted, are presented elsewhere in this issue.

The revisionary work for this volume began more than 17 years ago. Bird students are fortunate to have a single, accepted authority for the classification of birds for the entire North American Continent. I consider this an indispensable reference for anyone seriously interested in ornithology. Copies are obtainable from Charles G. Sibley, Treasurer, Fernow Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, at \$8 postpaid.—PHILIP A. DU MONT.

* * * * *

A PADDLING OF DUCKS, by Dillon Ripley (Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1957; cloth, 8vo size, pp. 1-256, with 34 drawings by Francis Lee Jaques; price, \$6.00).

Dr. Ripley has built a large following through his two previous books, "Trail of the Money Bird" and "Search for the Spiny Babbler." Those who enjoyed traveling with him to far corners of the globe in those books, will thoroughly enjoy his new publication, which is mostly autobiographical.

His consuming love of birds is always apparent as he describes his experiences in raising ducks. With the help of an understanding family, at the age of 17 he constructed a small duck pond on his home place in Connecticut. Thus began the studies of ducks and geese which were to continue for the next 25 years. In fascinating detail and informal style he tells about the trials of an aviculturist in propagating wild fowl, with discussion of techniques of hatching, rearing, feeding and protecting his birds against disease and predatory creatures.

Personal anecdotes crowd every page to make a highly entertaining story. His vivid description of the ducks, eiders and scoters that had come in contact with oil at sea takes the reader directly to the scene as an eye witness. Equally interesting are his studies on the distribution of ducks, his visit to Dr. Kuroda, the Japanese authority on waterfowl, his hunting trips in northern Ceylon, and incidents in searching for birds in various spots in Europe and Asia. Returning from these far-flung travels to his home rearing ponds time after time, he drops back into the intimate account of various waterfowl he was raising. The reader gets as well acquainted with them as if they were members of the family.

It is a chatty book, full of homey atmosphere and good humor, but skillfully handled by a trained scientist and a gifted writer—the kind of book to drop into the traveling bag or sit up with on a winter evening.—F. J. P.

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are available to all members. The list was recently revised and a new supply has been printed on a 4 x 6 double card. Prices are: In lots of less than 50, two for 5c, or 10 for 25c. In lots of 50 or more, 2c each. Order from Dr. Myrle M. Burk, Secy.-Treas. Iowa Ornith. Union, Route 2, Waterloo, Iowa.



RING-NECKED PHEASANT

From a drawing by E. W. Steffen
 Cedar Rapids, Iowa